

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 AID-20 OMB-01 IGA-02 DRC-01 /117 W

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R 021045Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5202

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 3144

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID MASS SWEL CB

SUBJ: U.S. EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR PHNOM PENH FIRE VICTIMS

SUGGESTED PRESS RELEASE

REFS: (A) PPHN 2306; (B) PPHN 2385; (C) PPHN 2755

SUGGEST FOLLOWING AS PRESS RELEASE:

ON MARCH 1, PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET INITIATED DISTRIBUTION OF BUILDING MATERIALS PROVIDED BY U.S. ECONOMIC AID TO HELP THE VICTIMS OF THE KHMER COMMUNIST ARTILLERY BARRAGE OF FEBRUARY 11 REBUILD THEIR HOMES.

AT THIS INITIAL DISTRIBUTION, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY KHMER AND U.S. OFFICIALS, RECONSTRUCTION MATERIAL WAS PROVIDED TO 54 FAMILIES. IT IS PLANNED TO PROVIDE BUILDING MATERIAL FOR 1,938 FAMILIES ALTOGETHER. EACH FAMILY WILL RECEIVE MATERIALS NOW WORTH ABOUT \$300 ON THE LOCAL MARKET. U.S. ECONOMIC AID WILL PROVIDE ALTOGETHER OVER HALF A MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF AID FOR RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION OF THE DESTROYED NEIGHBORHOOD. THIS ASSISTANCE IS A CONTINUATION OF PREVIOUS HELP PROVIDED TO

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THE VICTIMS OF THE DEVASTATING FIRE CAUSED BY THE BOMBARDMENT

AND WHICH MADE 10,000 PEOPLE HOMELESS. FIRST PHASES OF ASSISTANCE CONSISTED OF EMERGENCY SUPPLIES, DISTRIBUTED BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES USING U.S. AID FUNDS, AND CASH PAYMENTS MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE KHMER GOVERNMENT'S FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN TO WHICH THE U.S. CONTRIBUTED.

THESE PAYMENTS WERE MADE ON FEBRUARY 26 BY THE PRIME MINISTER. TO FURTHER ASSIST THE HOMELESS IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THEIR BURNT OUT HOUSES, THE UNITED STATES ECONOMIC AID TO CAMBODIA IS BEING MADE AVAILABLE FOR THE PURCHASE OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS SUCH AS LUMBER, FLOORING, CEMENT FOUNDATION POSTS AND WALLS FOR REBUILDING HOUSES.

EACH OF THE 1,938 FAMILIES WILL RECEIVE ENOUGH HEAVY WOODEN POSTS AND PLANKS TO ERECT, BY LOCAL STANDARDS, A MODEST HOUSE WITH A 12 X 18 FOOT FAMILY LIVING SPACE. THE HOUSES, FOLLOWING LOCAL CUSTOMS IN A TROPICAL CLIMATE, WILL BE ELEVATED OFF THE GROUND WITH ROOFING MADE FROM LOCAL MATERIALS.

THIS HOUSING WILL ALLOW THE HOMELESS TO SECURE THEIR FAMILIES AND RETURN TO THE JOBS WHICH THEY HAD BEFORE THE UNEXPECTED COMMUNIST SHELLING INTERRUPTED THEIR LIVES. DUE TO THE EXTENT OF THE DESTRUCTION WHICH LEFT 10,000 PEOPLE HOMELESS, EXPERIENCED VOLUNTARY AGENCY OFFICIALS ESTIMATE IT WILL TAKE APPROXIMATELY THREE TO FOUR WEEKS TO GET ALL THE BUILDING MATERIALS TO ALL THE FAMILIES BUT WITH INITIAL DISTRIBUTION STARTED, CONTINUED DELIVERIES WILL BE MADE EACH DAY ON A SCHEDULE DRAWN UP TO COMPLETE THE TASK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
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